
TORRANCE MUNICIPAL CODE (effective January 4, 2008)

CHAPTER 7 - CAMPAIGN CONTRIBUTION LIMITS

(Added by O-3404; Amended by O-3437; O-3462; O-3522, O-3668, O-3698, O-3699, 0-3700)

ARTICLE 1 - GENERAL PROVISIONS

SECTION 17.1.1. PURPOSE.

This chapter imposes a maximum limitation on the amount of campaign contributions that may be solicited and received by a candidate from a single source with respect to any single election campaign.

SECTION 17.1.2. RELATION TO POLITICAL REFORM ACT OF 1974.

This chapter is intended to be a supplement to and in no way to conflict with the Political Reform Act of 1974, which is codified in Title 9 of the California Government Code and its implementing regulations. Unless otherwise defined in this chapter, words and phrases have the same meanings here as those given to them by Title 9 of the California Government Code and its implementing regulations, and with the interpretations of these provisions by the California Fair Political Practices Commission.

SECTION 17.1.3. DEFINITIONS.

- a) "City of Torrance Elective Office" means the offices of Mayor, Councilmember, City Clerk and City Treasurer.
- b) "Family Contributions." Contributions by a husband and wife will be treated as contributions by separate persons and will not be aggregated. Contributions by children under eighteen years of age will be treated as contributions by their parents and attributed proportionately to each parent (one-half to each parent or the total amount to a single custodial parent).

SECTION 17.1.4. LIMITATIONS ON CAMPAIGN CONTRIBUTIONS.

- a) "Declaration of Candidacy." No person may make, and no candidate for City of Torrance elective office and the controlled committee of that candidate may solicit or accept, any campaign contribution until such time as the candidate has filed a statement of intention to be a candidate.
- b) "Contribution Limits." No person may make any campaign contribution to a candidate for City of Torrance elective office, or to the controlled committee of that candidate, that will cause the total amount contributed by that person to the candidate to exceed One Thousand Dollars (\$1,000.00) during an election cycle. The contribution limits established by this section will apply to all contributions received after March 1, 1999. Notwithstanding the foregoing, a candidate may make campaign contributions in any amount to the candidate's own controlled committee.
- c) "Solicitation and Acceptance of Campaign Contributions." No candidate for City of Torrance elective office and no controlled committee of that candidate may solicit or accept any campaign contribution that will cause the total amount contributed by any one person to the candidate to exceed One Thousand Dollars (\$1,000.00) during an election cycle.
- d) "Return of Contributions." A contribution will not be considered to be received or accepted if it is not negotiated or deposited, and in addition it is returned to the donor within fourteen (14) days of receipt.

- e) "Post-Election Fundraising." A contribution for an election may be accepted by a candidate for City of Torrance elective office through the last day of the 17th month following the month in which the election occurred, only to the extent that the contribution does not exceed net debts outstanding from the election, and the contribution does not otherwise exceed the applicable contribution limit for that election. For elections occurring prior to November 1, 2002, contributions may be accepted through September 30, 2003, subject to the restrictions set forth above."

SECTION 17.1.5. LIMITATION ON LOANS.

A candidate for any City of Torrance Elective Office may not personally loan to his or her campaign, including the proceeds of a loan obtained by the candidate from a commercial lending institution, an amount, the outstanding balance of which exceeds \$30,000. A candidate may not charge interest on any loan he or she made to his or her campaign.

SECTION 17.1.6. CASH CONTRIBUTIONS.

No person may make, and no candidate for City of Torrance elective office, or controlled committee of that candidate, may solicit or accept, any cash contribution in excess of \$20.

SECTION 17.1.7. LATE CONTRIBUTIONS

- a) Each candidate or committee that receives a contribution that in the aggregate totals more than \$100 from a single source that is received before the date of the election at which the candidate is to be voted on but after the closing date of the last pre-election campaign statement, must report that contribution to each office with which the candidate or committee is required to file its next campaign statement and in compliance with this section.
- b) The recipient of the late contribution must report his or her full name and street address, the date and amount of the contribution, and whether the contribution was made in the form of a loan. The recipient must also report the full name of the contributor, his or her street address, occupation, and the name of his or her employer, or if self-employed, the name of the business.
- c) A late contribution must be reported by electronic transmission, facsimile transmission, guaranteed overnight delivery, or personal delivery within 24 hours of the time it is received. A late contribution must be reported on subsequent campaign statements without regard to reports filed pursuant to this section.

A late contribution need not be reported nor will it be deemed accepted if it is not cashed, negotiated or deposited and is returned to the contributor within 24 hours of its receipt.

SECTION 17.1.8. IDENTIFICATION OF SENDERS OF CAMPAIGN INFORMATION.

- a) U.S. Mail. No candidate for City of Torrance elective office or committee may send more than 200 substantially similar pieces of mail that support or oppose a candidate, unless the name, street address, and city of the candidate or committee are shown on the outside of each piece of mail and on at least one of the inserts included within each piece of mail in no less than 12 point type that will be in a color or print that contrasts with the background so as to be easily legible. If the sender of the mail is a controlled committee, the name of the person controlling the committee must also be included. A post office box may be stated in lieu of a street address only if the organization's address is a matter of public record with the Secretary of State.

- b) **Electronic Mail.** No candidate for City of Torrance elective office or committee may send more than 200 substantially similar transmissions of electronic mail that support or oppose a candidate, unless the name, electronic mail address, street address, and city of the candidate or committee are shown on the electronic mail in no less than 12 point type in a color or print that contrasts with the background so as to be easily legible. If the sender of the electronic mail is a controlled committee, the name of the person controlling the committee must also be included. A post office box may be stated in lieu of a street address only if the organization's address is a matter of public record with the Secretary of State.
- c) **Door Hangers and Printed Materials.** No candidate for City of Torrance elective office or committee may distribute more than 200 substantially similar pieces of written material in the form of door hangers or other printed material, that support or oppose a candidate, left on private property, unless the name, street address, and city of the candidate or committee are displayed in no less than 12 point type that will be in a color or print that contrasts with the background so as to be easily legible. If the distributor of the door hanger or printed material is a controlled committee, the name of the person controlling the committee must also be included. A post office box may be stated in lieu of a street address only if the organization's address is a matter of public record with the Secretary of State. A copy of the door hanger or other printed material must be delivered to the City Clerk within forty-eight hours of distribution of the first piece. This section does not apply to printed material delivered directly to a person.
- d) **Telephone Calls.** No candidate for City of Torrance elective office or committee may make or pay for 200 or more substantially similar telephone calls, which support or oppose a candidate, made by an individual or by electronic means, that advocate support of, or opposition to, a candidate, unless during the course of the call the name of the organization that authorized or paid for the call is disclosed to the recipient of the call. Unless the organization that authorized the call and in whose name it is placed has filing obligations under the Political Reform Act, and the name announced in the call either is the full name by which the organization or individual is identified in any statement or report required to be filed under the Political Reform Act or is the name by which the organization or individual is commonly known, the candidate, controlled committee, or slate mailer organization that paid for the call must be disclosed. This section does not apply to telephone calls made by the candidate, the campaign manager, or individuals who are volunteers. A candidate, controlled committee, or slate mailer organization that pays for telephone calls as described by this section must maintain a record of the script of the call for a period of one year. If any of the calls qualifying under this section were recorded messages, a copy of the recording must be maintained for one year.